against transfer of mining lease in respect of Kumaraswamy Iron Ore deposit in District Bellary held by NMDC in favour of new Steel Plants to be established in the State. NMDC plans to work Kumaraswamy Iron Ore deposit fully as replacement of Donimalai Iron Ore projtct on exhaustion of Donimalai deposits.

Licence to Multinational Companies for Mining

1671. SHRI GAYA SINGH:
SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether some multinational companies have been given lease and licences to operate different mines in the country during the past two years;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof country-wise and mine-wise;

(c) whether these foreign firm have asked to revise the royalty rates, and is so, the details thereof;

(d) whether as a result thereof the country's Public Sector companies operating such mines at present have been endangered;

(e) whether any protection has been assured before the entry of multinational companies is allowed; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) Prospecting Licences and Mining Leases are given by the concerned State Governments as per provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957. In case of companies, the Act envisaged that a mining lease/prospecting lincence can be given only to a company in which majority of the Directors were Indian citizens and not less than sixty per cent of the share capital was held by pesrons who are either citizens of India or companies as defined in the companies Act, 1956. This Act was amended on 25-1-1994 and it now permits grant of a prospecting licence or a thing lease only to a company as defined in sub-section (1) of section 3 of the Companies Act, 1956.

(b), (d), (e) and (f) Does not arise.

(c) Suggestions for revision and rationalisation of royalty rates are received from time to time from various sources. A view on such suggestions is taken as and when these rates are revised in accordance with provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957.

Mineral Exploitation in the country

1672. SHRI G. Y. KRISHNAN: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Australian Indian Resources (AIR), a company set up by a consortium of mining firms in Western Australia to act as a vehicle for mineral exploitation in India, has applied for prospecting licences for 50,000 square kilometers in India;

(b) if so, the areas identified for prospecting in the various States concerned and the various minerals and metals like gold, copper, nickel, zinc and platinum to be explored and exploited; and

(c) Government's reaction to the grant of mining rights in India sought for by the Australian firm?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) to (c) The information is being collected from the various State Governments/UTs and will be pleased on the Table of the House.

Parliamentary Privileges

1673. SHRI K. R. MALKANI: Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would consider codifying Parliamentary Privileges; and